sentations have been received from the All India Food Preservers' Association from time to time mentioning problems being faced by the food and vegetable processing industry and making various suggestions in this regard. The suggestions relate to, *inter alia*, need for giving fiscal concessions, need for developing linkages between production, processing and marketing, development of suitable packaging materials, coordination of research and development activities, etc.

Government takes into account suggestions received from various organisations while formulating policies and programmes for the development of the food processing sector. Various measures, such as inclusion of most food processing industries in Appendix-I, broad banding of certain food processing industries, granting of fiscal concessions from time to time such as providing relief in excise duties/customs duties, setting up of Development Councils, etc. in addition to formulation of a number of schemes to support the growth of food processing industries have been taken by the Government.

Review of Import Policy

*214. SHRI E. BALANANDAN: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have received any request for reviewing the import policy which has had received any request for reviewing the import policy which has had deleterious effects on the agricultural commodities and cash crops of Kerala like coconut, rubber, spices, etc.; and

(b) if so, what action has been taken in the matter ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU) : (a) Yes, Sir. The main points in the representations were that the new Import & Export Policy in respect of agricultural and plantation products—coconut oil, copra, natural rubber, coir yarn, cocoa and spices would have adverse effects on the farmers of Kerala.

(b) There has been no change in the new Import & Export Policy for the above mentioned items except for nutmeg and mace. Import of these two items which was earlier allowed under Open General Licence by all persons for stock & sale has been tightened by bringing them into the licensable category in the new Import & Export Policy.

Proposal to set up Statutory Handloom Board

*215. SHRI KOTAIAH PRAGADA : Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is a proposal under Government's consideration to set up a statutory Handloom Board on the lines of the Khadi and Village Industries Commission; and

(b) if so, when such a Board will be set up ?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTRY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRIES (SHRI SHARAD YADAV) : (a) No, Sir. There is, however, an All India Haundlooms & Handicrafts Board with advisory functions on matters relating to handlooms and handicrafts.

(b) Does not arise.

Import of Capital goods for manufacturing camera roll films

*216. SHRIMATI BIJOYA CHAKRAVARTY : Will the Minister

of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether two applications for import of capital goods for manufacturing camera roll films have been received from M/s. India Cine agencies ;

(b) if so, the action taken thereon ; and

(c) whether Government propose to impose a suitable export obligation in such cases before considering the applications ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND TOURISM (SHRI ARUN KUMAR NEHRU) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Both the applications are under consideration. The question of imposing an export obligation will be considered by the appropriate Capital Goods Committee for imports.

Writing off of bad debts by nationalised banks

*217. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: SHRI ATAL BIHARI VAJPAYEE :

Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have any data with them as to the bad debts which have been written off by each of the nationalised banks during each of the last three years, if so, how much of it was loaned in loan-melas;

(b) whether the Reserve Bank of India has issued guidelines to strengthen their credit appraisal machinery and to exercise close supervision and control over the advances in order to minimise the write offs;

(c) whether after issuance of these guidelines there has been any downward trend in the writing offs; if so, what are the details thereof;

(d) if not, whether Government propose to review the position ;

(e) whether Government have stopped the loan-melas, as were held in the past, if so, what are the reasons therefore; and

(f) what is the total amount given in loan-melas and how much of it had to be written off or is due to be written off ?

THE MINISTER OF FINANCE (PROF. MADHU DANDAVATE): (a) to (f) In accordance with the statutes governing the public sector banks as also in terms of the practices and usages customary amongst the banks, the bankers do not disclose the quantum of such bad and doubtful debts for which provision has been made to the satisfaction of their statutory auditors as also the amount of bad debts written off.

Reserve Bank of India have issued no separate guidelines to the banks for organising loan melas or credit camps. The banks can organise credit camps as part of overall measures taken by them to increase the flow of credit to weaker sections. The data reporting system does not yield separate information in respect of number of credit camps, amount disbursed and amount written off etc. However, as at the end of March, 90 the public sector banks had outstanding advances of Rs. 9896.85 crores involving about 252.20 lakhs borrowal accounts in favour of weaker sections of the society.

Government and Reserve Bank of India (RBI) have been impressing upon the banks the need to strengthen their machinery for credit appraisal and for exercising effective supervision and control over the advances made. The banks have also been advised to evolve a strict time discipline so that irregular and sick accounts are discovered early